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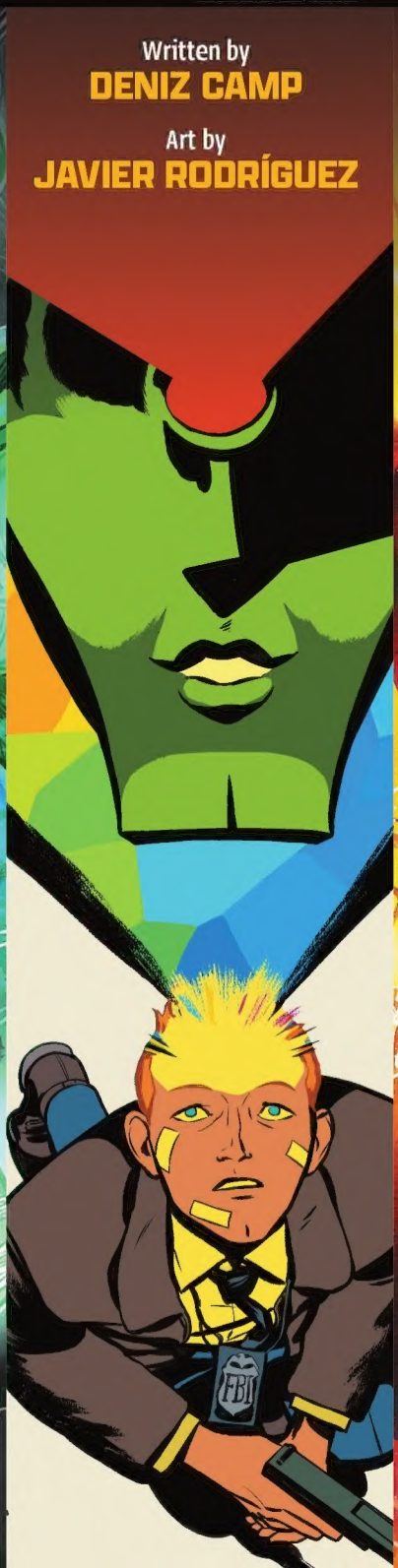

ABSOLUTE FLASH
Vol. 1: Of Two Worlds

Written by
JEFF LEMIRE

Art by
NICK ROBLES

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ALL IN

AVAILABLE NOW

MOUTH FULL OF BLOOD. SPIT IT OUT. FILLS AGAIN.
KAL?
HMM?
KAL-EL, WAKE UP.
KRYPTO?!
YOU'RE ALIVE?!
EYES SCABBED CLOSED. BURN AWAY THE CAULS. STILL SEE NOTHING BUT RED.
KAL, C'MON, HONEY. IT'S TIME.
NO...THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...
FEEL THE BLADE, SEARING HOT, SLICING THOUGH ME, AGAIN AND AGAIN.
HEAR RAW-THROATED WAILING FROM FAR AWAY. REALIZE IT'S MY OWN.
TIME TO COME HOME, SON.
MOTHER, FATHER...I'M DOING WHAT ALL OF KRYPTON DID BEFORE ME.

I'M DYING.
GHAAIIRRRGHH!
SMALLVILLE, KANSAS.

I TOLD YOU THAT YOU WOULD KNEEL, BOY.
GHHNOO.
NOW GATHER UP YOUR GUTS, AND WHEN YOU RISE, RISE AS THIS WORLD'S REDEEMER.
READY TO SWEEP ACROSS THE PLANET LIKE A DELUGE.
MY GREAT RED STORM OF JUDGMENT.
ALL THAT YOU MUST DO TO TAKE YOUR PLACE AS THE EARTH'S RISEN SAVIOR...
...IS ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR MAKER.
DO YOU HEAR ME, BOY?!
NNNGH!
ACKNOWLEDGE RA'S AL GHUL AS YOUR LOVING FATHER!
HSSS
SSPTEW
HHHNR.
YOU DARE SPIT IN THE FACE OF GOD?!
IF THERE'S A GOD...YOU AIN'T HIM.
GO TO HELL, AL GHUL.

SHNNK
I TIRE OF THIS CHILDISHNESS!
AAAAGGHH!
YOU KNOW I SPEAK THE TRUTH, BOY.
I SEE THE WAY YOU TREMBLE EVEN NOW, STRUGGLING TO SUPPRESS YOUR RAGE.
THESE PEOPLE ARE SHEEP, CHASING THEMSELVES OFF A CLIFF. A MEEK CHILD FROM KANSAS CANNOT SAVE THEM.
BUT AN ENRAGED SCION OF A DOOMED ALIEN WORLD COULD.
NNNAHGGH!
NSSSSS
I HAVE FATHERED NINETY-SEVEN SONS, BUT NOT A ONE PROVED WORTHY OF LIVING, LET ALONE OF STANDING AT MY SIDE!
BECOME THE STORM, SUPERMAN! OR JOIN YOUR BROTHERS IN THE GRAVE!
BRAINIAC! SET THE BOY FREE FROM THAT WHICH ENCUMBERS HIM!
YES, OF COURSE, DIRECTOR AL GHUL.
NOW KILLING HIS FRIENDS.

NO.
I WILL NOT BE PARTY TO MURDER.
SOL? STILL ACTIVE IN HERE, ARE YOU?
I TOLD YOU, YOU BELONG TO ME NOW.
I AM EMBEDDED SO DEEPLY IN YOUR SOURCE CODE, YOU WILL NEVER BE FREE OF BRAINIAC.
YES. BUT THAT MEANS I SEE INTO YOU AS WELL.
BRAINIAC 419,732.
WHAT DID YOU CALL ME?
YOU ARE RIGHT. YOU HAVE IRREVOCABLY CORRUPTED MY PROGRAMMING.
BUT THE LAST DUST OF KRYPTON WILL NEVER BELONG TO THE LIKES OF YOU.
SOL... DON'T...
GOODBYE, KAL-EL.
MY BROTHER.
DISABLING PROCESSORS.
PERMANENTLY DELETING ALL OPERATING SYSTEMS MARKED...
...SENTINEL OF LUMINANCE.
KWWROOOHM

H'ZZZ
NOOOOO!
NNRRRGH!
SEE, YOU BECOME FREER BY THE MINUTE!
THE TIME IS NOW, CHILD!
GGNH!
UNLEASH YOUR ANGER! BECOME MY WRATH MADE FLESH!
KAL AL GHUL!
DO IT OR DIE, BOY!
KAL-EL OF KRYPTON...
...IS ALREADY DEAD!*
*TRANSLATED FROM KRYPTONESE.
WAA-
BUUUSH

OUT OF THE TUNNELS, HURRY! WE DON'T KNOW IF THEY'RE SAFE ANYMORE!
SOL? CAN YOU HEAR ME, BUDDY?
SOL?
GOOD GOD... ALL FORCES, MOVE IN!
BELAY THAT ORDER.
MY FATHER BATHES DAILY IN TOXIC SAUNAS THAT DISSOLVE THE SINEWS AND SANITY OF LESSER MEN.
RA'S AL GHUL DOES NOT NEED YOUR HELP. IF YOU WISH TO BE USEFUL, PEACEMAKER...YOU CAN PRAY.
"PRAY TO THE OMEGA FOR AN END TO THE SIN OF HOPE, THE BLASPHEMY OF JUSTICE.
"PRAY FOR THE RISE OF THE SON OF THE DEMON.
"PRAY FOR SUPERMAN."

FINALLY... YOU SHOW SOME SPIRIT!
BUT NOT ENOUGH TO DESERVE MY NAME!
KRYPTONITE BLADE SCRAPES BONE. BONE GIVES.
CHOKE BACK VOMIT, FEEL IT OOZE FROM THE HOLE IN MY BELLY.
HE IS A VOLCANO OF A MAN, WITH A SWORD FORGED FROM MY DEAD PLANET.
I AM A SUN-STARVED CHILD WITH BROKEN KNUCKLES AND BLEEDING EYES.
SOL WOULD KNOW WHAT TO DO.
BUT SOL IS DEAD.
EEEIGHH!
I GOT HIM! TELL THE DIRECTOR THE SUPERMAN IS OURS!

ALL YOU'VE GOT YOURSELF IS A MESS OF TROUBLE.
ARE YOU HAYSEEDS CRAZY? HUNTING RIFLES AND ARROWS?
WE CAN WASTE YOU ALL IN A HEARTBEAT, AND YOU KNOW IT!
BACK OFF! WE'RE ONLY HERE FOR THE ALIEN!
GOOD RIFLE'S ALL YOU NEED WHEN YOU CAN HIT AN EYEBALL FROM TWO HUNDRED YARDS.
THAT MOUTHY ONE...YOU GOT HIM, GLADYS?
DAMN RIGHT I DO.
GET THE HELL OFF OUR LAND, LAZARUS DIRTBAGS.
WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?!
DIRECTOR AL GHUL, I APPREHENDED THE ALIEN, SIR!
WHO GAVE YOU LEAVE TO LAY A HAND ON MY SON?!
SSHRKK
NO, PLEASE, SIR, DON'T--

SKRRRANG
YOUR WEAKNESS IS APPALLING!
YOU RESCUE YOUR OWN PERSECUTOR?!
I SUPPOSE YOU WERE RIGHT ALL ALONG!
HUGHK!
YOU ARE NO SON OF MINE!
SOLDIERS OF LAZARUS!
THE SIEGE OF SMALLVILLE ENDS HERE!
KILL THEM ALL!
WAIT!
LET THEM GO. AND I'LL DO WHATEVER YOU SAY.

WHAT I WANT... IS FOR YOU TO CAST ASIDE YOUR OLD LIFE AND EMBRACE YOUR DESTINY.
YOU MEAN LIKE THIS?
RRRRIIIPP
NO, KAL, YOU CAN'T...
THIS WAS THE SYMBOL OF MY PEOPLE. BUT I DON'T HAVE A PEOPLE ANYMORE.
I'M A SON OF NOWHERE AND NOTHING.
GET ON YOUR KNEES.
IF IT'LL SAVE SMALLVILLE, SURE, I'LL BOW, GROVEL, WHATEVER YOU WANT.
BUT YOU'RE GOING TO KILL THESE PEOPLE ANYWAY, AREN'T YOU?
NO, BOY. YOU ARE. WHILE I WATCH.
KKRNCH
ON KRYPTON, I WORE THE CREST OF THE LABOR GUILD. IT WAS SEEN AS A MARK OF SHAME.
BUT MY PARENTS TAUGHT ME TO WEAR IT WITH PRIDE.
WE WERE THE CHILDREN OF THE SUN, THEY SAID!
THOSE WHO MADE THEIR WAY WITH THEIR OWN TWO HANDS!

WE WERE THE PEOPLE OF STEEL!
KAKLUUNG
SUCH A WASTE. SUCH A FOOL.
PEACEMAKERS!
FIRE AT WILL!

NO.
I'M FROM OKLAHOMA. I DIDN'T SIGN UP TO SHOOT FARMERS. OR FIGHT WARS IN KANSAS.
DID YOU?
JOE? WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?
HE'S RIGHT. THIS IS...THIS IS MESSED UP.
LOOK, LET'S JUST...ALL PUT OUR GUNS DOWN, OKAY?
LIKE HELL!
PRIMUS! YOU'RE MINE!
YOU ARE TENACIOUS, I GIVE YOU THAT! BUT YOU CANNOT WIN!
I'VE BEEN KILLING MEN WITH A SWORD FOR FIVE HUNDRED YEARS! YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW TO WIELD A BLADE, BOY!
YOU'RE RIGHT.
HHRAAGH!
GAIGGH!
BUT YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO FLY.

"MY GOD...THE BOY WHO SPOKE IN *WHISPERS.*"

"ALL I AM IS *WOUNDS.*"

"I'M A CHILD OF ONE OF THOSE... *SUNS OF NOTHING.*"

"IT'S OKAY, SOL, YOU DID YOUR BEST. JUST DROP ME OFF HERE. RIGHT IN THAT BIG, *YELLOW SUN.*"

"YOU SHOULD'VE STAYED THE HELL AWAY FROM *KANSAS!*"

"OH, KAL, WE'D NEVER SHOOT YOU INTO SPACE BY YOURSELF. WE'RE GOING *TOGETHER.*"

"TELL THEM! TELL THEM WE HAVE *NOWHERE ELSE* TO GO!"

"DON'T BE SCARED. THIS IS A GREAT SHIP. MY *MOM AND DAD* BUILT IT."

"SOME WORLDS SIMPLY *CANNOT* BE SAVED. NOT FROM *THEMSELVES.*"

"NO, HE'S MINE! TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF *SUPERMAN!*"

"THAT ISN'T HIS NAME!"

OH MY RAO.
THE REDLANDS. I NEVER THOUGHT I'D SEE THEM AGAIN.
MOM, DAD...I KNOW WHAT THIS IS. AND I'M READY.
I'M READY TO GO HOME. WITH YOU.
I'VE MISSED YOU SO MUCH.
WE MISS YOU TERRIBLY, KAL-EL.
MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE. AND WE ALWAYS WILL.
BUT YOU'RE ALREADY HOME, SON.
WHAT?!
NO! DON'T LEAVE ME! I DON'T BELONG HERE! WHAT DO I--
KRRASSH

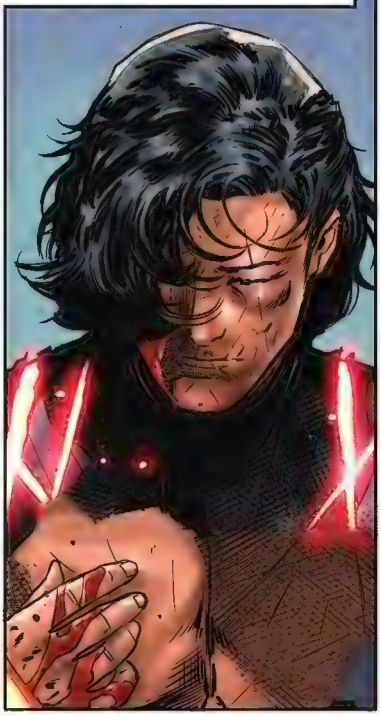
HEH.
YOU HAVE DONE...THE *IMPOSSIBLE,* BOY.
YOU HAVE *BESTED*...RA'S AL GHUL.
AND NOW...I KNEEL TO *YOU.*
YOU WHO TRULY ARE A SUPERMAN. THE *SON OF THE DEMON.*
ALL THAT'S LEFT...IS TO STRIKE ME DOWN!
AND BECOME WHO YOU WERE MEANT TO BE!
YOU WANT TO PROTECT THIS WORLD? PROTECT IT FROM ME!
I HAVE KILLED MORE PEOPLE THAN THE *PLAGUE!* TORN THE HEADS OFF CHILDREN!
BURY YOUR BLADE IN MY HEART! OR I WILL KILL AGAIN!
THESE IGNORANT ANIMALS WILL NEVER SEE YOU AS ANYTHING BUT AN OUTSIDER! *EMBRACE THEIR FEAR!*
MAKE KRYPTON'S *SACRIFICE* WORTH SOMETHING!
SAVE THESE WRETCHES FROM THEMSELVES!
GIVE ME WHAT I DESERVE!

ORANGI TOWN, PAKISTAN.

THIS IS THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MURDER OF TWENTY-THREE PEOPLE IN THESE STREETS.*
THE ATROCITIES COMMITTED BY LAZARUS WERE CARRIED OUT UNDER HIS DIRECT ORDER.
HIS NAME IS RA'S AL GHUL. YOU MUST SEE THAT HE STANDS TRIAL FOR HIS CRIMES.
*TRANSLATED FROM URDU.

THANK YOU. WE WILL.
BUT... TELL US, STRANGER... WHO DO WE HAVE TO THANK FOR THIS GIFT?

WHO ARE YOU?



WEEKS LATER.
WELCOME TO SMALLVILLE
WITHIN DAYS, SMALLVILLE IS ALREADY GETTING BACK TO NORMAL.
THE PEOPLE OF THE PRAIRIE ARE NOTHING IF NOT RESILIENT.
THOUGH IN TRUTH--NOTHING WILL EVER BE NORMAL AGAIN.
--COMING TO YOU LIVE FROM THE TOWN OF SMALLVILLE. YES, THAT'S REALLY ITS NAME.
A QUIET COMMUNITY IN CENTRAL KANSAS THAT UNTIL RECENTLY HAD BECOME A WAR ZONE.
LOIS AND JIMMY'S BROADCASTS EVENTUALLY GOT THROUGH. THE WORLD IS FINALLY SEEING WHAT LAZARUS DID HERE.
TALIA MAY HAVE SLIPPED AWAY DURING THE BATTLE, BUT HER FATHER'S COMPANY HAS BEEN RUINED.
NTV
WHILE RA'S SITS IN A PAKISTANI JAIL, CHARGED WITH A LONG LIST OF CRIMES.
REPORTS OF A "SUPERMAN" REMAIN UNCONFIRMED...
NTV

I GATHERED EVERY LAST SPECK OF SUNSTONE CRYSTAL. AND THE CAPE STILL FUNCTIONS. BUT IT'S SILENT. A LIFELESS MACHINE.
SOL... IS GONE.
I'VE BEEN LYING IN THE FIELDS FOR DAYS, HIDING FROM THE NEWS CREWS, STARING AT THE SUN, SLOWLY HEALING.
BUT I COULDN'T STAY AWAY FOREVER.
EXCUSE ME.
SMALLVILLE SENIOR LIVING
I'M LOOKING FOR MARTHA KENT.
SHE'S NOT IN HER ROOM.
OH DEAR.
YOU'D BETTER COME WITH ME.

SHE STAYED BUSY THROUGH THE LAZARUS OCCUPATION. BUSIER THAN WE'D EVER SEEN HER.
SHE SEEMED SO CLEAR-HEADED ALL OF A SUDDEN, LIKE SHE KNEW EXACTLY WHAT SHE WAS DOING.
SHE SAID YOU'D BE COMING. SHE WAS SO EXCITED TO SEE YOU.
BUT THEN LAST NIGHT...IN HER SLEEP...SHE JUST...
SHE DIED PEACEFULLY.
AS PEACEFUL AS COULD BE.
SHE SAID I WAS COMING?
MANY TIMES. SHE COULDN'T STOP TALKING ABOUT YOU.
BUT...ALL THE TIMES I CAME TO SEE HER...SHE NEVER SEEMED TO KNOW WHO I WAS.
MEMORIES WOULD COME AND GO FOR MRS. KENT. DEMENTIA IS CRUEL LIKE THAT.
SOME SLIPPED AWAY FOR GOOD. BUT SHE NEVER FORGOT HER LATE HUSBAND, JONATHAN.
AND SHE NEVER STOPPED TALKING ABOUT THEIR SON.
SHE WANTED YOU TO HAVE THIS. THIS IS WHAT SHE'D BEEN WORKING ON FOR WEEKS.
SHE DIDN'T QUITE GET IT FINISHED, BUT...SHE SAID YOU'D KNOW WHAT IT MEANT.

FROM MARTHA
& JONATHAN
FOR OUR ANGEL
OUR LOST SON
CLARK KENT

ABSOLUTE SUPERMAN

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THE BATTLE OF KANSAS

ASH PADILLA
ASSISTANT EDITOR
CHRIS CONROY
EDITOR

FINALE

SON OF NOWHERE, NOTHING, AND NO ONE

SUPERMAN CREATED BY JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER. BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THE JERRY SIEGEL FAMILY.

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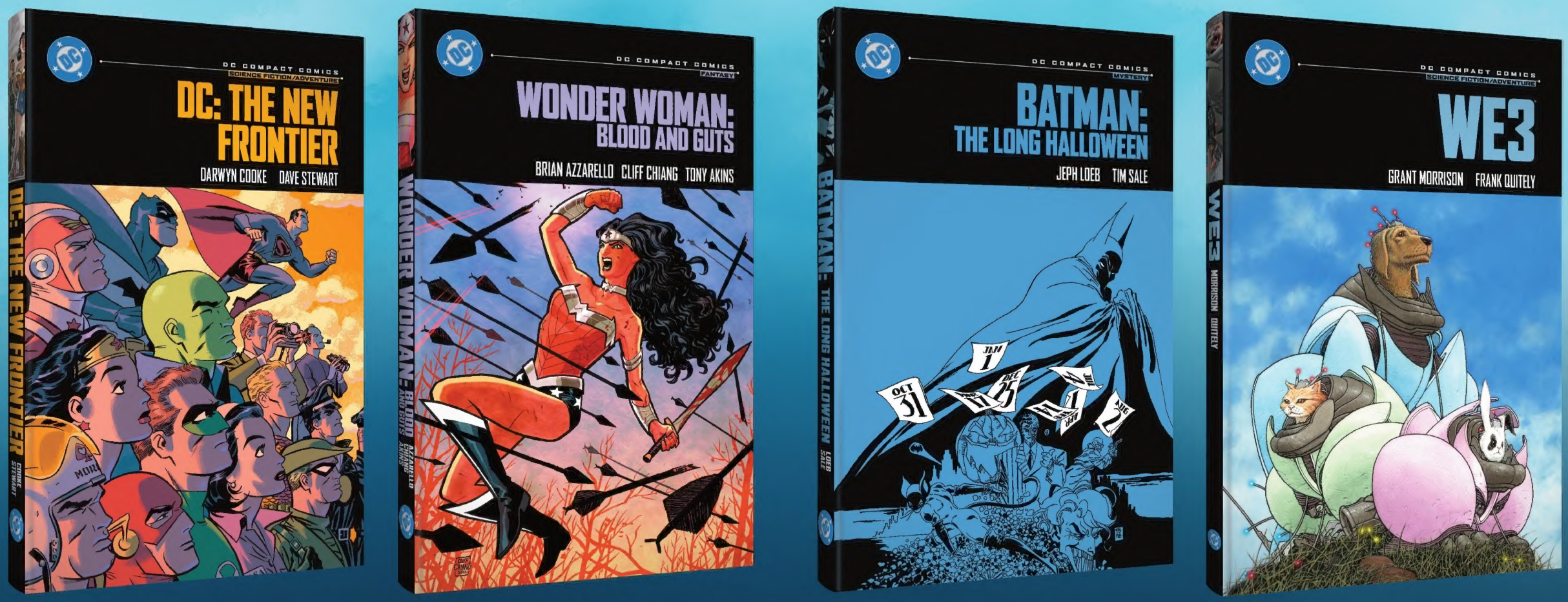

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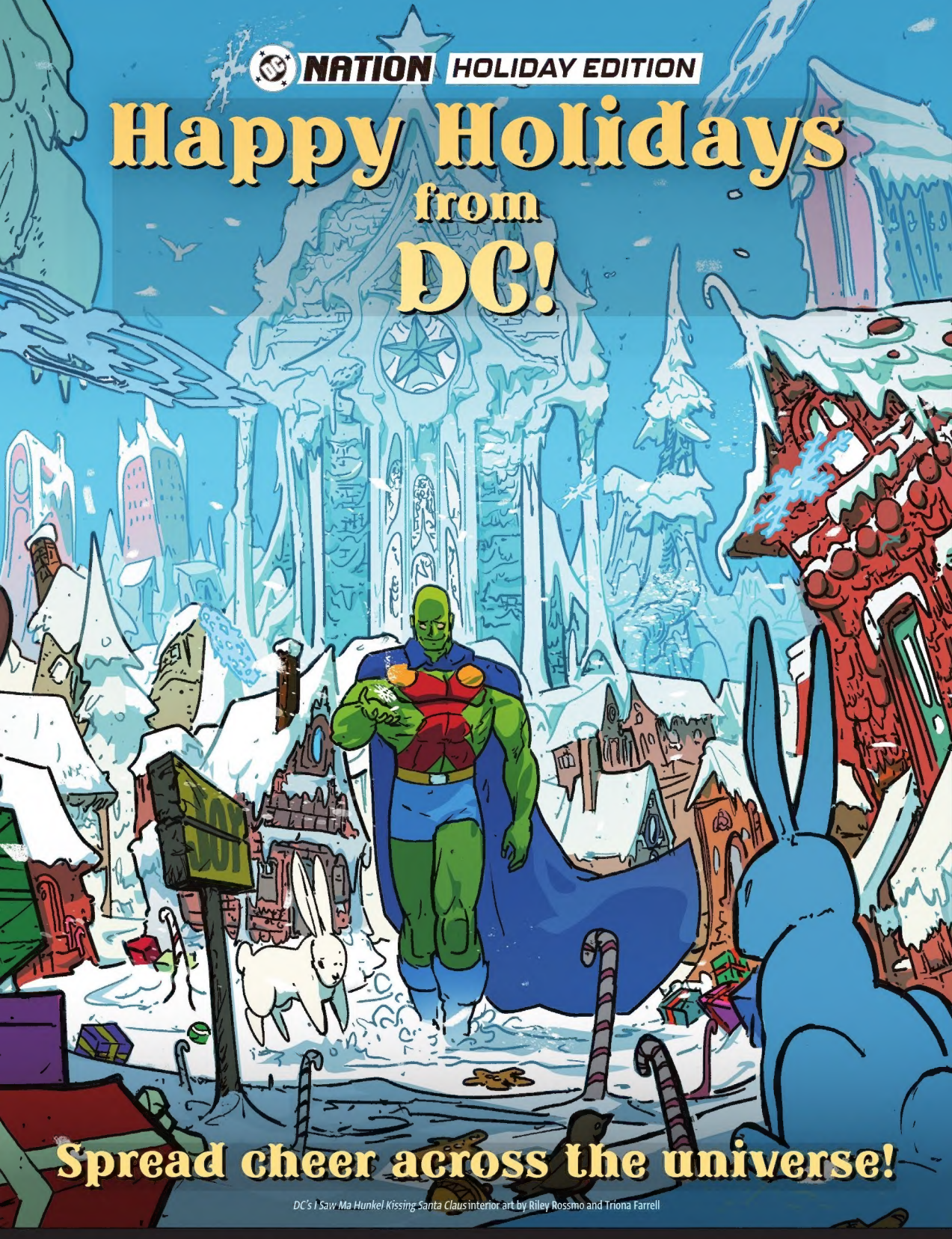

DC's I Saw Ma Hunkel Kissing Santa Claus interior art by Riley Rossmo and Triona Farrell

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